

OTHER NOTICES

Bowley, Agatha H. *The Psychology of the Unwanted Child.* Edinburgh, 1947. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. Pp. 112. Price 6s.

DR. AGATHA BOWLEY has designed this short book mainly to serve as a guide to wardens, foster parents, house mothers, nurses and others who may have the care of children uprooted from normal home life, or neglected and rejected by their parents; but it will also interest many who are concerned with the ways in which the recommendations of the Curtis Committee may be put into effect. Dr. Bowley describes in simple terms the emotional difficulties and practical needs of this group of uprooted children, drawing freely for illustrations from her experience of children in various substitute homes with which she has been associated, and of children referred to her school psychological service.

Taking at random fifty children in whom emotional rejection or material neglect was the common factor, Dr. Bowley gives details of each child's age, intelligence level, main abnormal symptoms and home circumstances. In this group, in which most of the children were of average intelligence and a few were of high intelligence, the age range was wide although there was some massing of cases in the six- to eight-year and the eleven-year periods. In only eight of the fifty children could the home circumstances be described as normal, that is, both parents were alive and took joint responsibility for the children. Pilfering was much the most common symptom reported—perhaps because it is the one most likely to be referred to a specialist service; difficult behaviour was the next common; wandering and enuresis or soiling ran equally for the third place.

In a chapter devoted to more detailed studies of children whom she has met in certain substitute homes of a more enlightened type, Dr. Bowley has attempted, by the use of John C. Raven's controlled projection test, to make a comparison of the attitudes and phantasies of deprived children with those of a small group of normal children from stable working-class homes. At first one is struck by the similarity of desires in these different groups of children, too small for statistical analysis as the author points out, but there is a suggestion that the normal group has a more forward-reaching attitude, shown in the larger proportion of children anxious to grow up and accept more constructive types of employment.

In the remaining chapters, Dr. Bowley discusses the methods of readjustment which may be adopted in the child's own home, or foster home, or in the school or institution in which he is placed. The proposals she makes are not revolutionary and would commend themselves as sensible to most readers; they are nevertheless valuable since they

combine theoretical grasp and personal experience, and the recommendations are practical and comprehensive. These, indeed, are the features which make this simple little book a timely and helpful contribution to an urgent topic.

HILDA LEWIS.

The Problem Girl. A Report by a Joint Committee of the British Medical Association and the Magistrates' Association on the problem of the unstable adolescent girl. London, 1947. British Medical Association. Pp. 15. Price 3d.

THIS report contains the findings of a Joint Committee of the British Medical Association and the Magistrates' Association, which was set up to consider the problem of the many unstable girls between the ages of 13 and 17 who come before the courts.

The committee recommends their reception at Observation Centres where investigations could be made by psychiatrists and social workers. This should be followed by a "prolonged stay of perhaps two or three years in a suitable school or hostel or institution run on the colony system, where they would receive training and discipline combined with psychiatric treatment." It will be a long time before such a service can be organized, and in the meantime it is suggested that certain approved schools should be selected for girls in urgent need of treatment and that these schools should be visited regularly by psychiatrists who would supervise the progress of individual girls and advise the resident staff on matters affecting the treatment and control of the patients.

K. H.

Robertson Scott, J. W. *England's Green and Pleasant Land.* Third edition, revised and extended. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1947. Penguin Books. Pp. xi + 183. Price 1s.

FOUNDER and for twenty years editor of *The Countryman*, Mr. Robertson Scott is well known as an authority on rural affairs. But this book will scarcely increase his reputation. For in the main it is a reprint of a book written nearly a quarter of a century ago attacking rural neglect and apathy as it was then; and as the author admits in his concluding chapters, which have been added on to the original text, rural conditions have since changed out of all recognition. This, of course, is mainly due to the war, which has given an immense impetus to agriculture and interest in the land generally—for instance, in the foundation of young farmers' clubs, wireless and propaganda talks about the use of the soil, the Women's Land Army, and so on.

The one fault which Mr. Robertson Scott now finds with country life (and the downright aggressive tone of his book suggests that he must be attacking something or other) is want of religious faith. In the original text the country parson is accused of snobbery, discourtesy, and want of neighbourliness. But in the concluding chapters he is let off rather more lightly, the main charge against him being that, instead of preaching a modified ethical humanism, he insists in repeating the old Church dogmas, which neither he nor his

congregation really care about. There is some truth in this charge, but the want of religious faith and the difficulty of reviving it is one of the central problems of our era; and Mr. Robertson Scott does not appear to offer any very concrete contribution to its solution.

Had Mr. Scott written a history of the development of rural conditions over, say, the last hundred years, he would have given us a far better and more interesting book.

RICHARD RUMBOLD.

PERIODICALS

Annals of Eugenics

June 1947, Vol. 13, Part 4.—*Sensory thresholds for solutions of phenyl-thio-carbamide. Results of tests on a large sample made by R. A. Fisher.*—By D. S. Falconer.—Between 1934 and 1939 many tests of P.T.C. taste threshold were made at the Galton Laboratory, but examination of the results was delayed by the war. The author describes the careful technique employed in order to obtain an unbiased estimate of the threshold, discusses the results for 629 subjects, and compares their indications with those from other published series. A concentration of 1 in 20,000 showed the minimal frequency of thresholds and was taken as separating tasters from non-tasters. The present data show little sex-difference in proportion of tasters, but confirm Hartmann's observation that the mean threshold for women is slightly lower than for men. Disagreement between American and Danish data and his own in respect of both the proportion of non-tasters and the concentration which best separates tasters from non-tasters lead the author to emphasize the importance of a carefully defined technique; he concludes that tests based on single concentrations cannot be trusted to discriminate the recessive genotypes.

Note on the calculation of the frequencies of Rhesus allelomorphs.—By R. A. Fisher.—The calculations of an earlier paper are extended in order to give more accurate estimates which provide satisfactory arithmetical checks.

A myopathic family.—By J. E. H. Sawyer.—A pedigree containing thirteen cases of a muscular dystrophy similar to Erb's scapulo-humeral type has been studied. The disease appears generally in the fourteenth year, but seems not to shorten life. No genetic mechanism is propounded and satisfactory evidence of inbreeding is lacking.

Some notes on discrimination.—By L. S. Penrose;
Some examples of discrimination.—By C. A. B.

Smith.—The method of discriminant functions, propounded by Fisher for assisting discrimination based on measurements of several characters, requires long and tedious calculations. Penrose makes the interesting suggestion that a good approximation will usually be given by a discriminant based only on "size" and "shape." The *size* and *shape* of an individual for this purpose are defined respectively as the total of standardized measurements and a weighted contrast between the measurements; commonly the correlation between the two will be negligible. Penrose shows the simplification introduced into the analysis by this approximate procedure, and illustrates it by a numerical example in which the loss of efficiency of discrimination is trivial. He also discusses the use of variance as a character assisting discrimination between two populations. Smith contributes to the statistical theory of discrimination. He shows that when corresponding variances and covariances in two populations are unequal a quadratic discriminant is required, even though the populations are normally distributed; he develops formulæ for the examination of such a quadratic discriminant. He gives two examples based on mental tests, in which quadratic functions prove slightly more effective than linear. A valuable paper is marred by irritating and unnecessary experimentation in mathematical notation.

A factor analysis of body measurements for British adult males.—By C. Burt and C. Banks.—This paper is based on measurements of 2,400 R.A.F. volunteers, for whom standing height, sitting height, arm length, leg length, thigh length, abdomen girth, hip girth, shoulder girth, and weight were recorded. Standard methods of factor analysis, such as are used in the examination of data from mental tests, have been applied to eight age groups; the factor patterns are remarkably similar. The contributions of the several factors